THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • WEDNESDAY • MARCH 31, 2021 • ₹7.00 • PAGES 20 • LATE CITY EDITION

■ CHENNAI ■ MADURAI ■ VIJAYAWADA ■ BENGALURU ■ KOCHI ■ HYDERABAD ■ VISAKHAPATNAM ■ COIMBATORE ■ KOZHIKODE ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ■ BELAGAVI ■ BHUBANESWAR ■ SHIVAMOGGA ■ MANGALURU ■ TIRUPATI ■ TIRUCHY ■ TIRUNELVELI ■ SAMBALPUR ■ HUBBALLI ■ DHARMAPURI ■ KOTTAYAM ■ KANNUR ■ VILLUPURAM ■ KOLLAM ■ WARANGAL ■ TADEPALLIGUDEM ■ NAGAPATTINAM ■ THRISSUR ■ KALABURAGI

China withheld data from probe team, says WHO chief

A day after the WHO-China's final report on the origin of Covid rejected the Wuhan lab leak theory, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus tore into it, saying the global probe team did not get access to raw data in China

Tedros did not want to smoke out the lab leak angle, as he called for further investigation on all hypotheses, with additional missions back to China

"I do not believe that this assessment was extensive enough," Tedros said. "Further data and studies will be needed to reach more robust conclusions."

He also spoke about withholding of data. "In my discussions with the team, they expressed the difficulties they encountered in accessing raw data."

P16

1. New RBI rules require banks to send a notification to the customer 24 hours before the transaction is slated. The amount will be debited only after the customer gives his nod
2. Auto-debit payments for utility bills and subscription-based services will come to a halt
3. Standing instructions on credit or debit cards will get deactivated

WHAT WILL BE AFFECTED

Mobile and utility bill payments, subscription for online streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hotstar etc

WHAT WILL NOT BE AFFECTED

Standing instructions on bank accounts for recurring payments such as EMIs, payments or mutual funds etc will continue as usual

WHY THE NEW RULES

To safeguard customers from data leaks, hacking of confidential data and payment frauds

₹5,000 For auto-debit payments above this amount, banks must send a one-time password to customer to authenticate

EXPRESS READ

PM slams Cong-DMK for 'anti-women' mindset

Dharapuram (TN): In a veiled attack, PM Narendra Modi on Tuesday dubbed former union telecom minister A Raja, an 'outdated 26 missile' of the Congress and DMK that targeted Tamil Nadu women and slammed the Opposition parties for their 'anti-women' mindset. The PM alleged it was part of Congress-DMK culture to insult women. P7

With Covid spike, IT firms extend WFH by 3 months

Govt employees too want work from home or 50% staff at office

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

AS Covid cases are shooting up across the State, especially in Bengaluru, many IT and ITES companies are extending the work from home (WFH) option for their employees by three more months. The firms had earlier said WFH would be till March 31 and asked employees to return to work from Wednesday. But now they are sending out emails, asking staff not to visit offices, unless absolutely necessary.

State Government employees too are asking for work from home option as they pointed out that they are at a higher risk, since there is no restriction on the number of people visiting government offices.

A leading IT service management firm in east Bengaluru had earlier given the WFH option till March 31, but on Monday, employees received an email saying it has been extended by three more months. A multinational investment bank and financial services company in Bengaluru which had asked its employees to return to office from Wednesday, has told them to continue to work from home. An IT major too has extended WFH till May 31 and sent the mail to its employees a couple of weeks ago.

K S Viswanathan, Vice-President (Industry Initiatives), Nasscom, told *TNIE* that most of the companies had extended work from home till June and a few till September. P7

KARNATAKA SECOND WAVE BATTLE

21 HIGHEST SPIKE IN DAILY DEATHS SO FAR

11 deaths logged in Bengaluru Urban, followed by 3 in Mysuru, 2 in Bengaluru Rural and 1 each in Bidar, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan, Kalaburagi and Mandya

Situation is getting worse, says Centre

The coronavirus situation is "turning from bad to worse", the Centre said on Tuesday, while stressing that the whole country is at risk and nobody should be complacent. It said that eight of the top 10 Covid-19 high-burden districts are from [illegible]

FULL STORY P10

1,06,917 TOTAL TESTS ON TUESDAY

35,90,581 TOTAL VACCINATIONS [illegible]

2.78% STATE'S POSITIVITY RATE

No ban on bypoll-related rallies, says Chief Secretary

RAMKRISHNA BADSESHI @ Kalaburagi

THE Covid-triggered ban on protests and rallies in the state will not apply to poll-related political activities in Basavakalyan and Maski Assembly constituencies and Belagavi Lok Sabha segment, where the by-elections will be held on April 17, said Chief Secretary of Karnataka, P Ravikumar, here on Tuesday.

Ravikumar, who is touring Kalaburagi district, told *The New Indian Express* in an exclusive interaction that political parties are allowed to hold indoor and outdoor political functions and rallies, but they should adhere to Covid protocols when there is a congregation of people.

Taking the example of Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, where Covid norms are being followed during rallies, he said political parties here too can hold public meetings by asking people to adhere to Covid protocols. P3

CD row: Woman records statement

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a major development in the sleaze CD row case that involves former minister Ramesh Jarkiholi, the woman in the clips on Tuesday appeared before the 24th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court and gave her statement before the magistrate under Section 164 of Criminal Procedures Code (CrPC), which pertains to recording of confessions and statements.

She was taken to a special hall set up due to the Covid situation at Guru Nanak Bhavan in Vasanthnagar and her statement was recorded in-camera for about one-and-a-half hours. P4

daCunha/AB/734

Nirani: All for lifting ban on iron ore exports, as it can increase revenue

Minister for Mines and Geology Murugesh Nirani at the TNIE office in Bengaluru on Tuesday | VINOD KUMAR T

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

CITING that the State is facing a loss of ₹8,000 crore annually due to a ban on iron ore exports, Minister for Mines and Geology Murugesh Rudrappa Nirani said that lifting the ban can bring three times more revenue to Karnataka.

Nirani, who visited *The New Indian Express* office on Tuesday, spoke at length about his plans for the ministry and said proposing to lift the ban on iron ore exports is on his priority list.

"In Karnataka, iron ore is priced at $40-$50 per tonne since export is banned. But in the international market, it is $150-$160. Karnataka is the ultimate loser. It can gain three times the revenue on the same quantity of iron ore if exported," the Minister for Mines and Geology said.

EXPRESS TALK

Karnataka had slapped the ban in 2010 and it was later upheld by the Supreme Court following a multi-crore mining scam in Ballari.

The Federation of Indian Mineral Industries in 2020 had requested the State Government to reconsider its decision on the export ban.

The federation had estimated that the gross loss over to the state over 10 years was approximately ₹29,058.8 crore.

FULL STORY: P4

KALYAN JEWELLERS
100 CRORE WORTH GIFT VOUCHERS*
VA (Making Charges) STARTING FROM 3% ONWARDS*
UPTO 50% OFF* ON VA (MAKING CHARGES) FOR GOLD JEWELLERY
UPTO 25% OFF* ON DIAMOND JEWELLERY
UPTO 20% OFF* ON UNCUT & PRECIOUS JEWELLERY
Unconditional gift vouchers totaling to ₹100 cr INR will be issued against customer purchases at all our showrooms in India from April 1st to May 30th
BANGALORE - DICKENSON ROAD - #17, Ph: 080-25550533 | KORAMANGALA - No-74, Jyoti Nivas College Road, 5th Block, Ph: 080-25636833 | JAYANAGAR - 3rd Block, Opp. President Hotel, Ph: 080-26647733 | MALLESWARAM WEST - No-120, 11th Cross Margosa Road, Ph: 080-23360533 | MARATHAHALLI - HAL Old Airport & Vartur Main Road, Ph: 080-25400533
PHOENIX MARKETCITY - LG-69, Whitefield Main Road, Devasandra Industrial Estate, Mahadevapura, Ph: 080-49626533
WWW.KALYANJEWELLERS.NET | FOLLOW US ON | BUY ONLINE @ WWW.CANDERE.COM